

Early Childhood Outcomes

On October 26 & 27, 2005, Parts C and B administrators met with DESE to develop a pilot process on early childhood outcomes, facilitated by Robin Rooney and Anne Lucas of NECTAC. Individuals participating represent all regions of the state, urban (St. Louis, Springfield), suburban (St. Joseph, , Columbia, Camdenton, Joplin), and rural (Hannibal, Meramec Valley) communities, and the various racial and ethnic populations.

Beginning in November 2005 but no later than January 15, 2006, three models of determining early childhood outcomes will be piloted across Missouri through June 2006. This data will be reported to OSEP in February 2007. The three pilot models include determining early childhood outcomes through:

- use of multiple sources as currently implemented (status quo), in some cases specific tools will be used as the “default” assessment tool of choice if the status quo does not provide such information. Such tools include the Dial, Brigance, Ages & Stages Questionnaire, and High Scope COR [Columbia, St. Joseph, NW SPOE, Greater St. Louis SPOE]
- use of specific assessment tools (HELP and Ages & Stages Questionnaire) [Joplin & Evergreen SPOEs]
- development of a specific tool to rate OSEP-required outcomes based on the Brigance and HELP [SSD & Components, SSD SPOE, Springfield, Meramec Valley]

In all pilot sites, individuals currently conducting assessments will continue in this role. Each site will determine child outcomes through both the assignment of a functional age and use of a multipoint scale (3, 5 or 7 points) based on the ECO scale. Collating data and determination of child outcomes are being piloted in three ways:

- determination by existing evaluation or IFSP team
- determined by tool (where tool is being developed for this sole purpose)
- determined by administrator using a formula to convert data into a 5 point scale modified from the ECO Center scale

Children participating in the pilot process will be determined using the following criteria:

- Child must have the potential for 6 or more months of service in the Part C or 619 program
- Child must enter the program on or after the date the site begins pilot procedures (i.e., pilot procedures will not be applied or “back-dated” for children who entered the program before its designated start date). Entry to the program is being piloted as the date the child is determined eligible for Part C or 619 services, and programs will have a 30 day window to determine the child's outcome level after this point.
- In large programs, a sample of evaluators will be included in the pilot process, and any child meeting the criteria above who is evaluated by those select individuals will be included in the pilot (e.g., Special School District of St. Louis County will train some of its evaluators in the process, and all the children they work with will be included in the pilot).

In March 2006, the workgroups will reconvene to recommend a statewide process to the DESE based on an examination of:

- the extent to which each pilot process met stated principles (useful at local and state levels, simple/feasible, relevant to existing needs)
- the face validity of assigning children functional ages versus use of a multipoint scale to determine individual child outcomes
- efficacy and efficiency of use

At the March 2006 meeting, workgroup participants will help make final decisions about the manner and components of data submission, as well as recommendations for statewide data collection (when, where, how, what) and analysis procedures. Subsequent to this meeting, the Missouri process for determining child outcomes will be finalized and prepared for dissemination and training in local Part C and 619 programs for implementation during the 2006-07 school year.